

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY ROME

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION GENEVA

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SUBJ: DISSENSION WITHIN DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (MDP)

REF: (A) LISBON 1702; (B) LISBON 2126; (C) LISBON 2846

SUMMARY: THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED COALITION KNOWN AS THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (MDP) HAS SHOWN INCREASING SIGNS OF INTERNAL TENSION RECENTLY. BASIC CAUSE OF THIS TENSION IS SOCIALIST PARTY AND PPD RESENTMENT AT PCP HEGEMONY IN THE COALITION, AND CORRESPONDING DESIRE FOR GREATER BENEFITS FROM CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN MOVEMENT. COMMUNISTS FIND MDP VERY USEFUL TOOL AS THEY STRIVE TO PROJECT A MODERATE DEMOCRATIC IMAGE TO PUBLIC, AND MAY GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO PREVENT ITS DISSOLUTION. REALIZING THIS, OTHERS IN COALITION ARE NOW DEMANDING MORE FROM PCP. END SUMMARY.

1. DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (MDP), NATIONWIDE COALITION ENCOMPASSING COMMUNISTS, SOCIALISTS, AND SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (PPD), AND WHICH INCLUDES AS MINOR PARTNERS LEFT SOCIALIST MOVEMENT (MES), HAS SHOWN INCREASING SIGNS RECENTLY OF SEVERE INTERNAL DISCORD. UNDERLYING REASONS FOR DISCORD ARE THREEFOLD: RESENTMENT BY NON-COMMUNISTS IN COALITION OF PCP LEADERSHIP HEGEMONY WITHIN MDP; COMMUNIST USURPATION OF MAJORITY OF VACANCIES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHICH OTHERS IN MDP FEEL SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED MORE EQUITABLY AMONG MDP PARTICIPANTS (REF C); AND RECENT GWSRUPTIONS OF PPD AND PSP POLITICAL RALLIES BY ALLEGED PCP MILITANTS. FURTHER CONTRIBUTING FACTOR IS IMPROVEMENT IN ORGANIZATION AND STRENGTH OF NON-COMMUNIST PARTICIPANTS IN MDP WHO CORRESPONDINGLY NEED ORGANIZATION LESS THAN BEFORE, AND ARE THEREFORE MORE WILLING TO CRITICIZE IT PUBLICLY.

2. TENSION BETWEEN PPD AND PCP PEAKED THIS WEEK AS A RESULT OF THE DISRUPTION OF A PPD RALLY IN THE ALENTEJO BY ALLEGED PCP ACTIVISTS. COMMUNIST AGITATORS ARE REPORTED TO HAVE TAKEN OVER PODIUM, CUT MICROPHONE AND OTHERWISE PREVENTED HOLDING OF MEETING. PPD POLITICAL COMMISSION IMMEDIATELY ISSUED COMMUNIQUE EXPRESSING ITS INDIGNATION THAT FELLOW MEMBER PARTY IN COALITION WOULD SEEK TO HINDER ITS ACTIVITIES, AND DEMANDING PUBLIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXPLANATION OF THIS AND OTHER SIMILAR EPISODES FROM PCP. IF RESPONSE NOT FORTHCOMING, PPD SAID IT "RESERVES THE RIGHT NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY MORE JOINT INITIATIVES WITH THE PCP" I.E., IN MDP COALITION.

3. SOCIALIST PARTY IN RECENT COMMUNIQUE ALSO TOOK A SLAP AT COMMUNISTS (ALTHOUGH NOT BY NAME) WHEN IT CRITICIZED MDP FOR "CREATING OBSTACLES TO PSP ORGANIZATIONAL

EFFORTS". SOCIALISTS PROVIDED NO DETAILS ABOUT THESE "OBSTACLES", ALTHOUGH IT SEEMS PROBABLE THAT THEY ARE REFERRING TO COMMUNIST DISRUPTION OF THEIR MEETINGS. WHILE POINTING OUT THAT THE MDP MADE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRACY IN PORTUGAL IN FIRST WEEKS AFTER COUP, AND MAY STILL HAVE ROLE TO PLAY IN CERTAIN PARTS OF COUNTRY, PSP STATEMENT MAKES IT CLEAR THAT PARTY FEELS MDP IS NO LONGER WHAT NATION NEEDS TO SOLVE PROBLEMS AHEAD. SOCIALISTS FEEL PEOPLE SHOULD JOIN PARTIES IN FUTURE, NOT THE MDP. IN ITS OPINION DEMOCRACY IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL PARTIES EACH OF WHICH PRESENTS CLEAR OPTIONS TO ELECTORATE. EXISTENCE OF MDP IS HINDERING THIS TASK TO EXTENT THAT IT TRIES TO MASK REAL DIFFERENCES AMONG COMPONENTS IN COALITION. RATHER THAN CONTINUING TO HIDE THESE REAL DIFFERENCES, COMMUNIQUE SAYS, THOSE IN MDP SHOULD SPEAK OUT IN FUTURE AS PARTY REPRESENTATIVES, NOT ON BEHALF OF COALITION AS WHOLE.

4. SOCIALISTS PROMISE TO CONTINUE FOR TIME BEING TO PARTICIPATE IN MDP BUT WILL NOT HIDE THEIR PARTY AFFILIATIONS. HOWEVER, PSP DOES NOT ACCEPT SUGGESTIONS MADE RECENTLY IN PRESS THAT AN ELECTORAL FRONT FOR UPCOMING ELECTIONS BE CREATED. PSP SAID IT WISHES TO MAKE KNOWN THAT IT IS NOT IN FAVOR OF FUTURE ELECTORAL COALITION OF ANTI-FASCIST GROUPS IN GENERAL, OR EVEN LEFTIST GROUPS, UNDER MDP BANNER. IT NOTES THAT A VOTE FOR THE PCP IS NOT SAME AS VOTE FOR PSP OR PPD, AND CLAIMS ELECTORATE SHOULD BE GIVEN CHOICE OF THESE DIFFERENT OPTIONS. THEREFORE PSP, IN DEFENSE OF MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM, OPPOSES ALL AND ANY ATTEMPTS TO INSTITUTIONALIZE A COMMON FRONT OF DEMOCRATIC FORCES, EVEN IF AT SUPRAPARTY LEVEL.

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COMMENTS:

5. MDP HAS EVIDENTLY PROVEN TO BE VERY USEFUL FOR PCP IN MAINTAINING ITS MODERATE, DEMOCRATIC IMAGE. MDP ALSO PROVIDES COMMUNISTS A COVER UNDER WHICH PARTY ABLE TO DO MANY THINGS, SUCH AS TAKE OVER LOCAL GOVERNMENT, WHICH IT COULD NOT SO EASILY ACCOMPLISH UNDER HAMMER AND SICKLE BANNER.

6. DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT HAS ALSO PROVEN USEFUL TO PSP AND PPD. FORMER HAS HOPED TO ABSORB INTO ITS RANKS A PORTION OF THOSE SUPPORTING COALITION, ESPECIALLY IN BEGINNING WHEN IT WEAKER THAN AT PRESENT. FACT THAT PSP CONTINUES TO REMAIN IN ORGANIZATION DESPITE PROVOCATIONS INDICATES IT STILL FINDS MDP OF SOME, BUT DWINDLING, USE TO IT. PPD DECISION TO JOIN MDP BASED

PRIMARILY ON CLOSE ASSOCIATION SOME OF ITS MEMBERS WITH OLD REGIME (E.G., IN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY) AND NEED TO ACQUIRE ANTI-FASCIST CREDENTIALS ACCRUING FROM MDP ASSOCIATION. IT HOWEVER HAS BEEN CRITICIZED BY MANY POTENTIAL ADHERENTS AS OPPORTUNISTIC, AND NEEDLED FOR FRATERNIZING WITH THE ENEMY. SUCH CRITICS WANT THE PPD TO LEAVE THE MDP AND FORM A CENTER COALITION.

7. IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE WE BELIEVE PSP AND PPD CRITICISM OF COMMUNISTS IS NOT A STRATEGIC DECISION TO EDGE OUT OF MDP NOW, ALTHOUGH THIS APPEARS TO BE ULTIMATE GOAL. RATHER CRITICISM IS TACTICAL MOVE. COMMUNISTS HAVE BEEN PUT ON NOTICE FOR FIRSTTIME THAT THEY SHOULD "ROLL OVER AND NOT HOG SO MUCH OF THE BED", LEST THOSE IN IT SEEK OTHER RESTING PLACE.

8. PUBLIC EXPOSURE OF DIRTY PLAY BY PCP ELEMENTS AT LOCAL LEVEL HAS PUT COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP IN UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION. WE DOUBT THEY ARE FOMENTING HARASSMENT OF OTHERS IN COALITION AT LOCAL LEVEL, WHERE EVEN FOR PCP IT MUST BE DIFFICULT TO PREVENT EXCESSES BY POLITICALLY INEXPERIENCED CADRES. PPD AND PSP LEADERS REALIZE THIS, YET ARE SHREWDLY USING OCCASION AND THREAT OF DROPPING OUT OF MDP TO EXTRACT MORE OUT OF PCP FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SHAKY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALLIANCE THAN THEY HAVE GOTTEN IN PAST. IF BECAUSE OF THESE THREATS PCP FORCED TO GIVE MORE TO ITS BEDMATES, THEN COMMUNISTS WILL HAVE SUFFERED STRATEGIC SETBACK. SCOTT

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